

Leintwardine Primary School

Snow & Bad Weather Policy



Approved by:	Head teacher	Date: September 2022
Last reviewed on:	September 2022	
Next review due by:	September 2025	

Occasionally, unforeseen circumstances arise which necessitates the closure of the School at short notice, the most common of which is severe inclement weather conditions.

To ensure the safety of our staff and pupils, our snow policy identifies procedures for occasions when pupils may have to be sent home early or when the whole school may be forced to close because of severe weather or other circumstances.

The procedures are primarily intended for severe weather, but they can also be applied in other circumstances, e.g. heating breakdowns or loss of utilities such as water or electricity.

Closures before the School has opened

The decision to close the school is not taken lightly. When staff and pupils can get to School, the School will be open, **subject to a safe level of staffing being available**. The decision will normally be taken by 0730 hours on the day in question.

The responsibility for deciding to close the School lies with the Head teacher, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors. Before making a decision, the Head teacher will make reasonable steps to ascertain the situation at the school itself and will discuss the matter with the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors if possible. The decision to close will be made after assessing the risks and taking into consideration local circumstances such as the fact that the access road(s) to the school may not be gritted. (Appendix A)

The decision to close cannot be made by Herefordshire Council staff as it is a school responsibility, however, where the decision to close or partially close has been made, the school will inform the council.

Where appropriate, the School can temporarily amend their times of opening and closing to allow some level of education provision to pupils. If it is appropriate, we would use this flexibility to allow the School to open at some point through the day when staff are more able to travel or to provide greater time for them to arrive at School.

Closures when the pupils are in School

Sometimes, circumstances arise such as inclement weather, when the children are at School. This can mean that, where there is the potential that the weather will bring significant disruption, the School will need to close early. This will be done as a last resort and usually after consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors.

In some circumstances, some classes may be sent home early as staff living further from school would need to be sent home earlier than others. If safe staffing ratios, or first aid response cannot be maintained, some pupils will need to go home at that time.

Contacting Parents

The School uses a number of means of communication to provide information to parents. If there is advanced notice of poor weather, then a letter will be sent home and information will be posted on the School Learning Platform Seesaw and Facebook.

If the decision needs to be made at last minute, such as early in the morning, then a Facebook message and Seesaw post will be sent informing them of a total closure or to identify which classes can be sent to school. The information will be posted on Seesaw, the school Website and our closed Facebook page.

The School is required to let Herefordshire Council know so that their web sites can be updated. It is also possible, but not guaranteed, that information will be provided to the BBC Hereford & Worcester Radio & websites.

In all cases, the School identify which classes can be sent to school. The information will again be posted on Seesaw and the closed Facebook page should be parent's first to look for all information.

Advanced Warning

Where ever possible, advanced warning of the potential risk of inclement weather will be provided. This will identify the risk and provide any information received from the Local Council.

Advanced warning will also be provided where there is any planned work to heating or utilities which may impact on the ability of the school to provide education to all the pupils. If the closure, particularly in relation to utilities or heating work, does not affect all children, parents will be informed of which classes can attend School.

Breakfast Club

Usually, Breakfast Club is available from 8.00 hours every morning for children who are registered. No child should be left before 8.00 hours as there is no-one in school to be responsible for them. Where conditions or an event means that Breakfast Club will be closed, Breakfast Club Staff will inform parents by text message before 7.54am. In some circumstances, Breakfast Club may be closed but School is open. Again, the Nursery will use its text message and Facebook to inform parents.

After School Club

Parents will be informed about the availability of the After-School Club as early as possible in the day. The decision to open or close the club will be made by the Head teacher.

Working at Home

Where School is closed for the day as a result of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, work or activity ideas for the children to complete at home will be available on Seesaw. The type of work will vary so that it is age appropriate. There is an expectation that in our efforts to reduce the impact of snow days that the children will spend some of their day working on the homework and reading. Any work will then be assessed on their return to school. Children also need chance to enjoy the snow and the work set will allow for this.

School Staff

Staff contracted to work on a day when the school is closed are expected to work their normal hours, this will involve setting work for children in their class and monitoring it on Seesaw. Additional activities such as planning preparation assessment and subject leadership responsibilities should be done in the time working from home.

Review

The Governing Body reviews this policy every three years. The Governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the Department for Education introduces new regulations, or if the Governing Body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. The School will also use their Risk Assessment 'Clearing Snow & Ice on School premises' as a base document for assessing the risks and control measures necessary.

School Closure Procedures - Checklist

Hazard	Risk: Yes/No	Possible Remedial Measures	Disruption to School service Yes/No
1. Condition of site and access.			
Walkways and pathways affected by snow, ice or flooding.			
Access road/driveway affected by snow, ice or Flooding.			
Car park(s) affected by snow, ice or flooding			
Yards and play areas affected by snow, ice or flooding			
Immediate area outside school site affected by snow, ice or flooding			
Pupils and staff need to walk between buildings			
2. Staffing Issues.			
How many staff are able to reach work, are there appropriate categories of staff/grades			
Can safe levels of supervision be guaranteed			
Need to combine/mix classes			
Supervision/care of pupils with SEN			
First Aid cover			
3. Building Issues.			
Adequate heating level throughout school (minimum 16°C 1 hour after opening)			
Risk caused by weather conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snow/ice overhanging roof at high level • Water ingress • Internal flooding • Damage caused to building fabric (e.g. by high winds) • Lightning strike • Other 			
Loss of utility service (gas water electricity): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School only • Surrounding area 			
Loss/lack of fuel supplies or delivery problem			
Failure or fault with plant, equipment, fixtures or fittings within School			
Has fault/ problem/ issue been reported to appropriate service			
4. Support Services.			
School Transport operating (if applicable)			
Catering provision available			
Cleaning/caretaking service available			

Risk Assessment Undertaken by:

(Headteacher) Date:

Result of Risk Assessment:School Open School Closed Open to Staff only

Chair/ Vice Chair of Governors consulted – Yes/ No

Council 'School Closure' webpage updated - Yes/ No